

THE CATHOLIC MIND

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Persecution of the Church in Germany

Complete text of the Pastoral Letter of the German Bishops on the situation of the Catholic Church in Germany. Reprinted from the NEW YORK TIMES, June 7, 1942.

DEAR Diocesans:

For years a war has raged in our Fatherland against Christianity and Church, and has never been conducted with such bitterness. Repeatedly the German Bishops have asked the Reich Government to discontinue this fatal struggle; but, unfortunately, our appeals and endeavors were without success.

Even in wartime, when solidarity has always been a matter of course, the fight continues; nay, increases in sharpness and bitterness and lies like a tremendous incubus on the German people, of whom at the last census 95 per cent—in Bavaria even 98 per cent—have professed to be Christians.

Therefore, the German Bishops have considered it their duty toward Church and people to put an end to this internal war by a public declaration and an effective order. As we know that the Faithful expect their bishops to do everything to protect belief and conscience, to re-establish the peace of religion and Church and to ease their souls from severe pressure,

we feel obliged to make public the most important points of our memoir (to the Reich Government).

I

In the Concordat of July 20, 1933, the Reich Government granted the Catholic Church State protection for the free development of its functions. Actually, these grants have not been kept. Christianity and the Catholic Church have been denied State protection and are being fought and fettered through measures and organs of party and State.

PRESSURE FOR APOSTASY

1. Promised and pledged was "liberty of Catholic belief and worship." In truth, pressure is frequently used on those who depend on State or party positions to force them to conceal or deny their Catholic religion or to compel them to abandon the Church. Through numerous ordinances and laws open Catholic worship has been restricted to such a degree that it has disappeared almost entirely from public life. It appears as if the symbol of Christ, which in the year 312 was gloriously carried from the catacombs, is to be driven back to the catacombs.

Even worship within the houses of God is frequently restricted and oppressed. Quite a number of places of worship, especially in the Ostmark, in the newly conquered territories, but also in the old Reich, have been closed by force and even used for profane purposes. Services in rented rooms have been prohibited despite urgent necessities. Purchase of lots for the construction of new churches is being rendered impossible.

From time to time religious instruction for children and juveniles has been prohibited even in church-owned premises and has been punished. Religious care in hospitals has been most severely restricted through new laws.

2. Catholic parents and the Catholic Church have the natural and Divine right to educate their children religiously according to the principles of the Christian Faith and moral law and in conformity with their own consciences. Through Concordats, the influence of the Christian churches on school and education has been expressly granted.

Actually, however, the rights of parents and Church are being more and more restricted and have become ineffective. Juveniles in State youth organizations, in hostels and labor camps, often even in schools and country homes for evacuated children are being influenced in an anti-Christian manner and kept away from religious services and celebrations. In the new State institutions (such as teachers' training schools, all political educational homes, etc.) any Christian and religious influence is absolutely impossible.

PRIESTS SPIED ON

3. The Catholic Church and its priests have the right and the duty to pronounce and defend, freely and unrestrictedly, orally and in writing, the creeds and doctrines of the Christian religion. The clergy, by agreement, has been granted State protection for the execution of its duties.

In reality, Catholic priests are watched constantly and suspiciously in their teaching and pastoral duties; priests, without proof of any guilt, are banned from their Dioceses and homes, even deprived of their freedom and punished for having fulfilled their priestly duties truthfully and scrupulously.

It is unbearable that clergy are being punished with expulsion from the country or internment in a concentration camp without court procedure or any contact with the clergy, when approach to the Bishopric could have resulted in the explanation of misunderstandings or the prevention of mistakes.

The holding of religious services and exercises is made almost impossible; the religious press has been destroyed almost entirely; the reprinting of religious books, even catechisms, school Bibles and diocesan prayer books is not permitted, while anti-Christian writings may be printed and distributed in mass circulation.

4. It is consented upon and granted by agreement: "Orders and religious societies are not subjected by the State to any specific restriction regarding their pastoral, educational, medical and relief work, conduct of their affairs and administration of their estates."

In fact, the Catholic Orders have been expelled from schools almost entirely and are being curtailed in their other activities on an ever increasing scale. A large part of their property and their institutions has been taken away from them and many are destined to perish because of the law prohibiting able-bodied men to work for them. Consequently, the German people will be in future without the pastoral services of the Orders of priests and without the sacrificing services of the nuns.

SEMINARIES CONFISCATED

5. It has been promised and granted: "Within the limitations of the law, the clergy has the sole right to erect, conduct and administer the seminaries for priests as well as residences for ecclesiastical students."

In truth, not only have the Church residences for students been largely destroyed or taken from the administration of the Church authorities, but even seminaries for priests have been confiscated and deprived of their clerical status. This is in conformity with the purpose of those who wish to deprive the Catholic priesthood of successors.

II

We emphasize that before the authorities we not only stand up for religious and clerical rights but likewise for the human rights bestowed by God on mankind. Every honest human being is interested in the respect and preservation of these rights; without them the entire Western culture must break down.

1. Every man has the natural right to personal freedom within the boundaries designated by obedience to God, consideration of his fellow man and the common good and the just laws of the civil authorities.

We German Bishops protest against every disregard of personal freedom. We demand juridical proof of all sentences and release of all fellow citizens who have been deprived of their liberty without proof of an act punishable with imprisonment.

2. Every man has the natural right to life and the goods essential for living. The living God, the Creator of all life, is sole master over life and death.

PROTEST STATE KILLINGS

With deep horror Christian Germans have learned that, by order of the State authorities, numerous insane persons, entrusted to asylums and institutions, were destroyed as so-called "unproductive citizens." At present a large scale campaign is being made for the killing of incurables through a film recommended by the authorities and designed to calm the conscience through appeals to pity.

We German Bishops shall not cease to protest against the killing of innocent persons. Nobody's life is safe unless the Commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is observed.

3. Every man has the natural right to property and the use of his lawfully acquired property and to protection by the State of private property against wilful interference. Nevertheless, in past years many

Church possessions, and especially houses of Religious Orders, have been taken away by force from their lawful owners and used for other purposes. Even places of worship have been confiscated and desecrated.

We Bishops, in the name of the Catholic people, from whom come the members of our Orders, protest against this violation of natural property rights and demand the return of the unlawfully confiscated, in many cases sequestered, property. We protest against such wilful acts for the sake of the common good and as defenders of the fundamental social order willed by God. For what happens today to Church property may tomorrow happen to any lawful property.

4. Every man has a natural right to the protection of his honor against lie and slander. On the front and in the homeland faithful Christians fulfil their patriotic duties like all their fellow citizens. Yet Catholic priests and laymen are suspiciously watched, secretly suspected, nay, publicly branded as traitors and national enemies, just because they stand up for the freedom of the Church and the truth of the Catholic Faith.

ORDERS LEFT HOMELESS

Catholic Religious have fulfilled their duty heroically in the field, at home and in war, a fact which has been frequently acknowledged through the bestowing of war decorations. In spite of this, many have been deprived of their monastic homes.

We Bishops protest against such violations of truth and justice and demand effective, honorable protection for all citizens, including faithful Catholics and members of Catholic Orders.

For months, regardless of war misery, an anti-Christian wave of propaganda, fostered by party meetings and party pamphlets, has been carried through the country with the clearly noticeable, even outspoken

aim to suffocate the vigor of the Catholic Church in German lands. If possible, they wish to destroy Christianity in Germany during the war, before the soldiers, whose Christian Faith gives them the strength for heroic battles and sacrifices, return home.

EXPECT IMMEDIATE RECTIFICATION

The vast majority of the German people, whose deepest feelings are hurt by such attacks on Christianity, justly expect the immediate and frank rectification by the Reich Government of the unjust oppression, and hated struggle against, Christianity and the Church.

Dear Diocesans: We Bishops have informed you of our grave worries and ardent endeavor for inner peace in our German nation. We call upon you, with the devotion we have always shown you, to support our efforts through your prayer and your unshakable faith, and to repulse decisively and vigorously all attempts to make you waver.

We wish to prove through our attitude that we long for nothing but internal peace, and esteem nothing as highly and faithfully as our sacred creed, which we shall defend against all attacks. Decisively and firmly we refuse the suggestion that we should prove our patriotic faith through faithlessness toward Christ and our Church.

We remain eternally true to our Fatherland just because, and at any price, we remain faithful to our Saviour and our holy Church. God bless our country and our holy Church. God grant an honest, happy, lasting peace to the Church and the Fatherland.

THE GERMAN BISHOPS

For the Diocese of Wuerzburg:

MATTHIAS, BISHOP OF WUERZBURG.

Wuerzburg, March 22, 1942.

The above pastoral is to be read in all churches

during the services on Passion Sunday, March 22, 1942.

Responsible for distribution and edition:

The Bishop of Wuerzburg.

MATTHIAS EHRENFRIED.

Some Present Day Errors

MOST REV. FIDEL GARCIA Y MARTINEZ

Text of the Pastoral Letter issued by the Bishop of Calahorra, in the Province of Burgos, Spain, on the Feast of St. Leander, February 28, 1942.

REASON FOR THIS LETTER

THE first duty of bishops, called by the Holy Ghost, as runs the teaching of the Apostle (Acts xx-28), to direct the Church of God, is as Saint Paul himself describes to his Disciple Timothy in these words: *Depositum custodi* (Tim. vi; 20); that is to say: To keep watch that the sacred trust of the revealed truth, which Jesus Christ has entrusted to His Church, be preserved entire and free from all error among the Faithful, as the object of that invaluable and essential Faith, which is the source of our whole supernatural life and without which there is no hope for salvation.

Of the errors in contradiction to this revelation of truth which have arisen and succeeded each other during the course of the centuries, and which constitute the history of heresy, all are not equally serious or equally dangerous, nor have all been the instrumental cause of similar harm to the mind. While some of these errors attack only a part of this revealed truth, others work against the whole or against its fundamental or basic principles. While some only succeed in winning over a very few minds, others succeed in separating or removing from the Church whole peoples and whole nations.

The spread of these harmful doctrines or their

effects have not always been in proportion to their ideological or intellectual content; that is to say, in proportion to the greater or less heterodox gravity of their fundamental statements or to the greater or less collection of doubtful reasons or false science with which they have been presented.

Frequently the success of error on minds in its struggle against the truth is due to circumstantial factors, human passions, desires, ambitions, interests, and personal or political partisanship, which all play their part in this struggle and which, as a result of the influences of the heart over the head (so well described by Balmes in chapter nineteen of *El Criterio*), have no less effect on collective groups as on individuals and have succeeded, with the smoke and fire of these passions, in preparing for such errors paths in the human conscience which, in other circumstances, would have been completely closed from the outset.

It would be strange if the spirit of evil and error, in its everlasting struggle against truth and good, had not taken advantage for its own ends of circumstances so filled with passion, so turbulent, so confused, so deeply agitated by partisanship and rivalry and hatred of peoples and races, as those through which we are at the moment living.

It is indeed a cause of open shame to see how far these passions and our party rivalries have succeeded in obscuring and perverting in the mind of poor humanity the most elemental principles of good, of justice and of truth. Excuses are invariably found for the violation of the most solemn pacts and the breaking of solemn promises, when these are done by the people of the same party. The enemy has no right to anything; what the enemy does is always bad; the enemy can never be right. Those of the same party have a right to everything; what they do is always good; they are always right.

The most noble faculty of the use of words, bequeathed as an image of the Eternal Word of God, the incarnation in material form of the spirit of man, bestowed by the Creator on man to reveal his thought, but at all times subject to the unchangeable law of truth which is above attack, has been so prostituted by deliberate, systematic and organized lying on the radio, in the Press and in all other public manifestations of words, that the current use of them is to oppress human dignity with the worst of all tyrannies, which is the tyranny over the mind by the calculated and systematic imposition of lies.

History tells us of soldiers who preferred to break their swords rather than have them stained with dishonor. It would be much to be desired for the honor of humanity if history gave us tomorrow the names of a number of writers and journalists who preferred to break their pens rather than place them at the service of lies. It is not sufficient to say that the interests of the Motherland make these things necessary. The name of Motherland, like the name of Mother, is almost sacred and should not be vainly taken as a cover for our passions or party feelings. To suggest that the Motherland, or to suggest that the Mother, desires from us any unworthy act is to stain her honor. The greatest good and the greatest glory of the Motherland, as of the Mother, are to have honorable and worthy sons; and the good patriot, like the good son, would prefer to have a poor Motherland and a poor mother, were this necessary, but with honor, rather than rich and powerful without honor.

This tendency that we have rapidly sketched of passions, perversions, blind partisanships, and especially the public and systematic organization of lying, can be seen as very dangerous if the spirit of evil and error should succeed at any moment in using it for its own ends. In effect it has been and is being used.

Were it a question only of purely temporal, political

or social matters, or of conflicting claims between different peoples or races, or of ideologies concerning problems of a material order only, we would say nothing. We would only deplore this descent to atavism and barbarity of the most elemental feelings of good, honor, justice and truth. But it is a question of matters and ideologies which have a direct effect on that revealed truth which it is our duty to defend within us, Venerable Brothers and Beloved Sons. It, therefore, seemed to be necessary to draw your attention to certain of the errors contained in these matters or ideologies, which in the present circumstances may well prove a serious danger for the integrity and purity of your faith.

THE COMMUNIST ERROR

One of these errors or collection of errors, openly in contradiction to the most fundamental principles of our holy Religion, is that known by the name of Communism. Its gravity leaps to the eye. Of its virulence and disastrous effects we have had a terrible and instructive demonstration in our own country.

Without ignoring the possibility that in certain circumstances a renewal of this virulence might arise at least for the moment in our country, it is withal not the Communist error which is a temptation or imminent danger for the consciences of the Faithful. The recent experience is still well remembered by all. The present social code, a reflection of this experience, is not propitious to Communist infection. The spreading of its doctrines and of all work and writings which defend it is forbidden by the authorities. The condemnation by the Church of these doctrines has been stated many times, by every means of publicity available. Misunderstanding or ignorance cannot, therefore, be pleaded as excuses. In this case the circumstantial elements or factors, which have many times

proved decisive in the struggle of error against truth, are today in our country working for the cause of good and truth.

OTHER ERRORS NO LESS SERIOUS

The same is not true of other errors, no less opposed to revealed truth, and no less serious than Communism. Springing from the same materialist or pantheistic sources, it is scarcely possible to establish an essential difference in their philosophico-theological substance. A doctrine which upholds the domination by nation or race in the social or political sphere is, from the religious and moral point of view, similar in every way to that which upholds the domination of one class.

From a conjunction of purely human and political events, the appreciation or valuation of which we are not discussing nor considering, it arises that these circumstantial factors previously mentioned, product of moments so impassioned, so turbulent, so confused, so deeply agitated by struggles and rivalry, of hatred of people and races, as those through which we are at the moment living, have succeeded in creating a sphere of special *danger*, particularly suited for the infiltration among us of these errors which we have just mentioned, unless we are forewarned, and, as a result, place the integrity and purity of our Catholic Faith over and above all passions, all interests and all evil of a purely material, transitory or party nature.

Publications contaminated by these erroneous ideologies are circulating in Spain, and the translation into our language has just been announced of the work which figures as a symbol of all such errors and is condemned by the Church. (We refer to the work *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* by Alfred Rosenberg.) Men and institutions representing these ideologies are praised frequently and without measure and certainly

without reservation. With countries or nations where these are freely prominent, cultural relations and interchanges of all kinds are maintained, yet a strict and lasting silence is kept about the strong condemnation by the Church of these errors, as well as the hard, implacable and tenacious religious persecutions resulting from these errors, unknown to us but ever present for our brothers, the Catholics of those countries where such errors are widespread, unless tendentious versions are even accepted, placing the blame for these persecutions on political crimes committed by the persecuted. Hence, we repeat, the special danger of misinformation and misunderstanding.

This special *danger* for us is the reason, as I have already said, of this pastoral letter which, rather than a reasoned explanation of doctrine, we wish to be a simple warning about the errors mentioned. These are so manifestly anti-Christian and even monstrous that it is sufficient to mention them—separating them from the passions, confusions and party feelings under which they may well wish to hide—for the Catholic conscience of our people to deny them energetically and wholeheartedly.

EXAMPLE OF THESE ERRORS

We wish first of all to give an example of these errors stating their exact meaning and scope, when they are allowed free and unrestricted expression. This quotation is taken from the *Osservatore Romano* for January 22, 1942, and this in turn was taken from the book *Gott und Volk: Soldatisches Bekenntnis* (*God and Race: a Soldier's Creed*) published by Theodor Frisch, of Berlin. From the second chapter entitled *Entscheidung* (*Decision*):

We live in an era of decision. With the recognition of the values of race and blood has begun a new concept of life, which is taking form in a new style of life and a new will to live. The era of international humanitarian dreamings has come to an end, and with it the dream of

a Christian humanity which for 2,000 years has agitated men without their ever having been able to attain it.

The concept of race and people has now been raised to that sacred level, and forms our law for the present and future. That which accepts this law is good and should continue to live. That which does not recognize it, is bad and should be changed, or rather it should disappear.

Our people have been given a difficult and long path to follow. We see all around us the aging peoples of other nations, while we are young and strong. Our future depends only on ourselves, not on Rome or Judea.

Germany has created herself. We have one Fuehrer, one will, one people. Nevertheless there is still a battle to be fought, the battle for the German man, for the German soul. It will be the most difficult and also the most fruitful and beautiful.

Where there is a struggle there is a front. The fronts are evident: one is called Christ, the other Germany. There is no third front, nor is there any compromise, only one clear decision. Today it is not a question of weakening Catholicism in order to reinforce Protestantism. Today every alien religion is replaced by a flame in the deepest depth of the German soul.

Each epoch has its symbol. Two epochs and two symbols are now facing each other: the cross and the sword. Today Christianity is under the sign of the Cross: Christianity, but not the Christian. Our struggle is not against man. It is against an idea.

The front of the cross has a strong wing and a weak one. The strong one is Catholicism, the weak one Protestantism. We struggle against both, and the object of the struggle is Germany. There will be neither dogma nor church, only the German community. No confession, not even a general Christian church, but only one people that believes in God and in itself!

The ideas contained in this chapter are again mentioned and explained in the following pages from which these paragraphs are taken:

My duty as a German is also to destroy all that is foreign to our stock. Everything, therefore, that is against our stock is against God. The German faith, therefore, will not impose on anyone his attitude to God. Everyone will seek his own path; neither Rome nor Jerusalem. Germany is our promised land! (p. 31).

Those many and beautiful words used by people devoted to the Bible are certainly not suited to a virile prayer. A short intimate confession, an exaltation and a promise, a glance at the Fuehrer or at the flag, a talk with a friend, a moment with nature are normally sufficient.

There is often struggle and strife within us, hours of desperation through which we feel ourselves drawn towards the light. And at other times a single word is sufficient which, like a credo, like a whisper of ultimate faith, comes from the heart: Germany. (p. 58).

We believe in this Germany, and we cannot believe at the same time in another life, because we must live for our people and not for our own personal happiness. Nor can we profess any faith that comes from the East and which even today calls Germans **with the ringing of bells**. Our holy land is Germany. We cannot listen to charlatans or apostles removed from the world, because if they believe in Rome they cannot believe in Germany. We cannot hold a double faith, and in our hearts there is room for one faith only, and one confession: Germany. (p. 64).

When we announced our faith in eternal Germany, we closed the era of religious impostures. If anyone rejects this faith, he is a criminal and a traitor, and there is no room for him among us. When Germans raise their country and people to the level of a religion, it will no longer be said: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Then we shall know only one commandment: "all for Germany." (pp. 69-70).

But the profession of faith of a national religion, the only one which ought to exist, will be: I believe in a strong God and his eternal Germany. (p. 71).

The Bishop continues:

APPLICATION OF THE ERRORS MENTIONED

As we have already stated, the errors of which this is a sample, and which could easily be many times multiplied, are so anti-Christian, so anti-humanitarian, that they imply monstrous religious, moral, social and political ideas. They reveal in their very texture such arbitrary, exaggerated and anti-scientific thought that no comment is necessary. The conscience of the Spanish people will reject them with energy and even be moved to give thanks to God that they have preserved sufficient mental balance to prevent their falling into such aberration or belief in such myths. We only wish to make one observation to warn any unforewarned mind. Although in the previous paragraphs there is many times mentioned the name of God, it is easy to understand that this God has nothing in common with the true God of Christianity. Their God is the God of pantheism; that is to say, of the absurd and the monstrous; or is simply a word empty of meaning, a formula imposed by convention or routine.

But the doubt which may assail a few is whether such errors are the particular outpourings of certain uncontrolled or diseased minds, or whether they are really claimed to be taken seriously and to be made the effective standard for the life of these people. Unfortunately the latter is the sad reality.

We are going to quote a witness which nobody can question as being either partial or undocumented; that is the collective Pastoral Letter of the German Bishops united at Fulda, published to be read in all the churches throughout the Reich on July 6 of last year.

Inspired to publish this Pastoral Letter by a feeling of "the grave duty imposed upon us by our sacred ministry and because we wished to reply to the desires and expectations of our Catholic people," they mention the inviolable rights of the freedom of the Church to carry out the mission entrusted to it by God, and the great sacrifices imposed in Germany voluntarily for the common good as a result of the war, and then refer to the indignities suffered by this same Church during recent years, and especially during recent months, in the following words:

We do not understand and we are filled with deep sorrow over the fact that many measures have been taken which cut deep into the life of the Church but have no foundation in the emergency needs of war-time. We need recall only the restrictions placed upon the fields of religious instruction, of religious literature, of our special care of souls in spiritual exercises and retreats, of our clerical duties in public hospitals, of public worship and church Feast days.

We recall with sorrow how many convents and ecclesiastical institutions have been closed within the last months and turned to non-ecclesiastical uses. We feel deepest compassion for the Religious banned from their convent homes. The Catholic people are grateful to them for everything they have done, publicly in the performance of pastoral work, in education and in charitable activities, and by prayer and atonement in the silence of their convents, and will never forsake these faithful sons and daughters of their country and of the Church.

Both to you and to us it is inexplicable that such measures have been taken in time of war, when the absolute unity of the nation should be conserved and not endangered or disturbed by offending the

religious feelings of so important a part of the nation.

You no longer have your parish weeklies nor your diocesan papers which hitherto have served to expound the Faith and to strengthen moral life in the family circle.

With the deepest pain we learn that the Catholic kindergartens, which, as a supplement to religious education in the family, have always been cherished in a special way by our Catholic people, have, in spite of the protests of the Bishops, been abolished throughout large parts of the Reich. Even earlier the Catholic schools had been taken away. Religious instruction in schools has been progressively curtailed or completely eliminated.

While we Bishops are gathered at the tomb of Saint Boniface, whose life-work it was to lead the German nation to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and who in accomplishing this task died the glorious death of a martyr, there is one realization that fills us with greater sorrow than all the single manifestations we have enumerated,—the realization that at the present moment many forces are at work trying to sever the bonds of unity, so full of blessings, between Christ and the German people.

We protest with indignation against a proposal of choice between our country and God. We love our German people and are prepared to serve our country with our lives. But we are also ready to live and die for Jesus Christ, to Whom we wish to belong now and forever.

It is certain that in our time of persecution of the Faith many have become weak or have even completely deserted Christ and His Church. The pain we feel for them is bitter, but we also say joyfully with Saint John: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the Truth." (III John, 4.) Many, very many, are walking in the Truth. In spite of all tribulation, they are firm in their fidelity to Christ and His Church. Even at the cost of great sacrifice they fulfil their religious duty. To them we send our thanks for their fidelity.

All of us, Bishops, priests and Faithful, are determined to reunite ourselves on the rock foundation of our Holy Church, around the Cross of our Redeemer. In these stormy times we will continue in love and confidence to strengthen and support one another by prayer, instruction and example. When this short period of earthly trial is finished we shall hear at the entrance of Eternity the words of our Saviour and Judge: "Thou hast acknowledged Me before men, therefore I will also acknowledge thee before My Father in Heaven." (cf Mat. x:32).

The paragraphs quoted from the Pastoral Letter of the German Bishops shows us on the one hand the high and exemplary spirit, in spite of very great difficulties with which they were surrounded, which inspired them as good Catholics, worthy of the early days of Christianity, to face persecution, if not as yet exactly deadly, since the design appears to be *not* to

make martyrs but apostates, yet nevertheless no less terrible. It is no less difficult and demands no less heroism and constancy to go voluntarily to prison, to undergo legal pressure, technically and systematically organized, every day and every moment of every day.

These paragraphs also reveal to us the typical anti-religious and sectarian feeling of the persecution; since no thought is given to the damage which may be done to the nation, as the Bishops thus point out, by provoking a division among the people of the country by the spread of sectarian hatred. If they can show themselves thus when burdened with the natural pre-occupations of war, what would they not do if they had their hands completely free?

A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF THE APPLICATION OF THESE ERRORS

It seems to us of use to add a further example of the application of these errors in a country other than Germany: so that it can be seen what sort of credit can be given to the statement previously quoted from the book *Gott und Volk*, "the German faith, therefore, will not impose upon anybody his attitude to God. Everyone can choose his own road."

On July 25 last, while the German Bishops were making public their feelings, the Bishops of Holland also published a collective Pastoral Letter.

There follows a full quotation from the Pastoral Letter of the Dutch Bishops concerning the Nazi attack on the Dutch Catholic Press, education, etc., but particularly the destruction of the Catholic Workers' associations. (Cf. CATHOLIC MIND, Nov. 8, 1941).

The Spanish Bishop proceeds:

HEROISM AND PERSECUTION

Of true comfort, Venerable Brothers and Beloved Sons, is the example of the Bishops and the German

and Dutch Catholics who are united in spite of mortal differences which may separate the two peoples, in the firm and virile defense of the rights of Christ, of the Church and their Christian consciences. Their testimony is therefore a lesson to us, as they know and understand through their own experience the deeply sectarian feeling, the harm done by apostasy to souls and the natural consequence of persecutions against the Church, caused by the errors already mentioned so many times. Were these to take root among us—which God will not allow—they would of necessity produce the same effects.

The reality of such persecutions, the hard and dreadful methods of oppression, of which it is not easy for us to form an idea, and in which there has been and still is a special interest that keeps us silent, is not only proved by the irrefutable testimonies which we have just quoted—a few from among many which we might have added—but such persecution has been revealed more than once in the sad words of the very Vicars of Jesus Christ, which should be sufficient to give conviction to every Catholic.

In the recent Christmas message sent to the world by the present Pope Pius XII, in connection with the fundamental requirements for a lasting and just peace, the Universal Father could not do less, after having mentioned how such persecutions, far from being lessened or abolished by the course of the war, have in many ways increased, than make this bitter plaint:

We have the same affection—and God is our witness of this—for all peoples, without any exception, and to avoid the appearance of being moved by any spirit of partiality, we have preserved until now a maximum of reserve; but the actions against the Church and the importance of these actions are such that we now feel obliged, in the name of truth, to mention the matter so that the misfortune may not arise of disruption among the Faithful.

CONCLUSION

It has deliberately not been our wish in this Letter

to enter into a doctrinal analysis of the errors to which we have repeatedly referred. Their special danger for us, the Catholics of Spain, lies less in the doctrines themselves than in the circumstantial factors, a product of the period of confusion and passions in which we live and to which we referred in the beginning, and under the shelter of which these errors furtively attempt to attain entry among us. We have, therefore, limited ourselves merely to giving a warning, and to pointing out the presence of these errors, and the harm caused by them in countries in which they have succeeded in becoming prevalent.

For a detailed and complete instruction of our Faithful, we are reproducing from our *Ecclesiastical Bulletin*, February-March, 1938, and as appendix to this Letter, the Encyclical of Pope Pius XI of March 14, 1937, "Concerning the position of the Catholic Church in the German Reich," in which such errors are analyzed and proved with supreme authority.

For our part, and as conclusion of this Pastoral Letter, we should like to instil into your souls, Venerable Brothers and Beloved Sons, the two following resolutions:

First, it is essential that the affection and sympathy of our hearts as Catholics join with our brothers in the Faith who are suffering persecution for Christ and for His Church. This is the least that we can and should do for them. We Spanish Catholics know, by our own experience, how sad it is for Catholics of other countries to appear indifferent, whether through lack of information or as a result of political interests and influences, to those who are suffering persecution for their God and their faith.

Let us not fall into the same error as that which we previously found so grievous in others. What would have been said if, when under Nero or Diocletian, or when in Mexico or in Russia, the Church was persecuted, the Catholics of any country had applauded the

tyrants, showing indifference towards the sufferings of their brothers in the Faith?

It is important that we should not do this, either as Catholics or as Spaniards, because it is forbidden us by our conscience as believers, because the hand which is raised against Christ and which strikes our Mother the Church and falls upon our Brothers in the Faith will always be . . . the hand which will strike us. Not as Spaniards, because it is forbidden us by the voice of the heroes and martyrs of our Crusade, who if they fought and died for anything—and there can be no question whatever about this “if”—it was for those great religious ideals which are also the soul of our nation; and because it is forbidden us also by the very conception of Spanish honor and chivalry.

To that chivalrous dignity which all recognize as a particular attribute of our character, which forms a primary element of that magnificent spiritual empire of ours which is the envy of all, of moral sovereignty and prestige—the only thing which nobody and nothing can seize from us unless we of our own volition throw it away ourselves—I repeat to this chivalrous dignity there is nothing so opposed as the spirit always ready to applaud in a servile manner the actions of the master, whether they are good or bad.

Whether in Mexico or Russia, whether in Germany, Poland or Holland or in any other country, our hearts and our sympathies will always be with our brothers who are suffering persecution for truth and justice.

The second resolution will be once again to affirm in our consciences, in a decisive and irrevocable manner, the obligatory hierarchy of values which is the substance of our Catholic creed; distinguishing carefully the absolute, essential, eternal values forming an insoluble link with God and with our immortal souls, and placing them over and above all other secondary, conditional, earthly and transitory values, however great and legitimate in their own sphere they

may seem or be. In this way we shall not fall into the temptation of placing the former below the latter, nor shall we be like wandering clouds carried hither and thither by any and every political or partisan wind, or any current of interest or fashion; which is what happens to them who have no faith and fail to recognize this absolute acceptance of values, so that they are today led by one as they were yesterday led by another, and will tomorrow be led by something different again; and today they will call good and true that which yesterday or tomorrow they called or will call evil and false.

And we close this, our Pastoral Letter, Venerable Brothers and Beloved Sons, with the same Catholic Faith and with the same certainty of magnificent hope, assured by the words of Jesus Christ, with which the Bishops of Holland and Germany closed theirs: There has been given us no other name on earth, in which we can be certain of salvation other than the name of Jesus Christ (Acts iv-12).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he who witnesseth unto Me before man, him will the Son of Man acknowledge before the Angels of God (Luke xii-8); and we send to you all our heartfelt pastoral benediction in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Journalism's Three Chief Devils

Reprinted from BLACKFRIARS

TODAY journalism to be successful seems to require three strings which must be played "fortissimo" all the time. As with all excesses, these loud noises forsake the balanced perfection of truth: they are

discordant and off the true note. If you want to sell your journal in great numbers, you must therefore compromise with truth under these three headings—a sad, if inevitable, consequence of war. But since you cannot “monkey” with truth without incurring further human tragedies, this three-fold excess spells disaster for the future.

First comes the rosy speculation on the future. Most papers and reviews are telling us how to plan for a future Europe, in which the old evils of pre-war days will be set aside and a healthy and happy world will spring up at the touch of some magic wand from the heaps of rubble and the waste lands we see around us. We feel that this breakdown of society, a direct result of our past evil foolishness, has completely broken with the past and left us free to make the future what we will.

There is, of course, a desperate need for preparation for the future, for a united and courageous effort towards the reconstruction of society. *Blackfriars* has been trying to help in a small way in such schemes by urging Christian cooperation with a definite policy on Education and Youth, on the Land and social problems in general. But it would not have its readers blind to the hazards to which those schemes are subject. The future shows very little light, and our human plans are bound to failure unless we realize that we are inheritors of the evil past and unless we receive some immediate aid from heaven. In a realistic article *On Everybody Being Wrong*, Mr. Christopher Hollis has written: “There are some who talk to us of the horrors of war and bid us tolerate them because of the new world of peace that we are to enjoy when it is all over. The immediate horrors of war are commonly exaggerated. . . . But the real horror of war is the terrible moral reaction which universal experience shows always to come with the conclusion of peace.” War itself is necessarily brutalizing. Death and human

butchery become so common as to be callously passed over with a shrug of the shoulders. At the beginning of the war Christianity experienced a brief revival as people sought support at the first shock. But churches are emptying again; the first religious reactions have worn off and callousness is hardening the arteries of society and increasing crime and selfishness. However many opportunities it affords us, the present disorder is a very evil thing, a cancer that grows malignantly.

We cannot disregard the past as though it no longer counted. Our schemes for regenerating the world can be at the best only breakwaters against a violent tide that began to gain impetus many years ago. In spite of its many achievements within recent history, our civilization seems to be flowing towards disintegration and decay. And no merely human power can prevent the course of nature; those bulwarks we are setting up can only divert the impetus of the waters of chaos. Only God can stem them completely. Only God can rejuvenate what has grown old in the course of nature. So if we are victorious we shall have to prepare for further catastrophies after another cycle of restive years, unless faith which comes from God has gripped the minds of most men. Lord Elton was perhaps expressing a greater need than he understood when he wrote: "It has been said that a nation which has once lost its faith is dying. . . . Can we expect to survive Armageddon, to be the dynamic shapers of a new world era, if we have lost the Faith which molded our own history?" That Faith is a supernatural gift of God. In that Faith lies our only hope.

SOCIALISM OR COMMUNISM

The future, if we can prophesy anything, appears to be leading to some kind of Socialism or Communism. That type of bureaucratic despotism has inspired a human faith far stronger than the cry of democracy

or liberty with which we started the war. This faith has given far more impetus to the war effort than any other conviction on the side of the Allies. It was only after Russia had been invaded that the occupied territories began to wake up and show some spirit against the oppressor. The call for aid to Russia has brought a far greater output from our war factories than before. Professor Joad has admitted that after the invasion of Russia he had to reconsider his objections against night bombing.

This is the second requirement for success in journalism today, an enthusiastic applause of everything Russian. And the alacrity with which support for Russia has been taken up shows the spirit of the age. Hammer and sickle on a red background float jauntily over English cities; everything Russian without distinction of persons or things is enthusiastically extolled; and there is no explanation offered for accepting so heartily what was previously condemned outright. Stalin receives ovations from ministers of state and of religion alike—a shrewd statesman certainly, but cannot we say this of the Duce and the Fuehrer? We are asked to distinguish between the Trotskyites who are still out to stop the war, and the good honest Communists who follow Stalin. Surprisingly, Catholics, too, join in the general hymn of praise for the Russian State. The report from Lisbon that His Holiness Pius XII had expressed his preference for Communism over Nazism, as the former has good elements, whereas the latter is wholly evil, is said to bear “an authentic ring.” Should we not expect Catholics at least to be suspicious of so sudden a reversal of the Vatican’s policy?

Certainly there are many good elements in the Communist’s social ideals. “When the painful question of the attitude of Christianity to the Communist revolution is put,” writes Mr. E. Lampert in *Christian News-Letter* Supplement No. 106, “this is what

emerges as most decisive: will Christianity break with the bourgeois capitalist world? . . . The Russian Revolution rises against the falsehood of politics, and herein lies its truth. . . ." An article in the *Church Times* (November 7) points out the distinction between Communism and Marxism, and urgently demands that the ecclesiastical authorities get together and outline a Christian Communism before it is too late. "The theory of atheism is only an accident arising from the conservative outlook of the Church, which appears to be content with the existing order of society." It has taken twenty years for Christian men in England to realize that, and they choose the most dangerous time to sit up and begin to shout the news. Surely when all the world is marching Leftwards, it is not the time to start saying that there is so much good in Communism after all! Those good things have been proclaimed by a few, and especially by the Popes, in a Christian setting.

Should Christians not continue more vehemently and unitedly to teach the social doctrines of the Church rather than meddle with a well-integrated system which is colored throughout by its accidental atheism? This sudden reversal of the general attitude of Christians towards Russia smacks of opportunism. In our enthusiasm to win the war and to help the poor Russian peasant to regain his home and farm we should be more objective and courageous.

HYMN OF HATE

But such an objective outlook is rendered more difficult by the third characteristic of popular journalism. We are urged by every paper and magazine we pick up to shake off the last vestiges of objective realism in a sustained hymn of hate against the German race. At the beginning of the war we were careful to distinguish between the Nazi and the German. We had nothing against the latter, we said, he was a well

meaning fellow evilly deluded by the Nazi, the devil at loose. Now we are told that the whole race is, always has been, and always will be, radically pagan, barbaric, uncultured. Christianity has never penetrated the Nordic heart; it has been only a veneer that falls off at the first touch. If anti-Semitism is wrong because it confuses the manifestly anti-social character of many Jews with the race as a whole and in every individual, surely to condemn the German race as a whole for the almost unbelievable and foul crimes of the comparatively few is no better? Those crimes are probably the foulest in history, but they are not the crimes of a race.

It seems necessary to stir up hate and disgust when in a really tight corner. The energy of all must be exerted to the utmost capacity if we are to extricate ourselves from the present danger, and apparently, as we can see in Nazi and Bolshevik tactics, hatred is the best stimulant. Yet, quite apart from the contrast of such a policy, that will make the future still more difficult. If peace-making is based on the principle that the German race, because fundamentally insane and dangerous, is to be suppressed, trodden into the earth and never allowed to rise again, it will be laying the foundation for another and more frightful war in future years. Persecution of that sort will only serve to unite the powerful German race against the oppressor.

We do not wish to whitewash the Germans. Indeed, it is alarming that the German Christians should have allowed things to reach their present state, with only an isolated voice such as that of the Bishop of Munster to cry out against that brutal paganism. But it does not help the possibility of peace in the future if we adopt an anti-Germanism as virulent as the Nazi anti-Semitism. It is supremely difficult to remain realistic and objective in such a war, but we are as doomed if we fail in this as we are if we fail in arms.

This realism will show a situation even more difficult and tortuous than is generally conceived. The future is not bright, and indeed it would be desperate if there were no God and no Jesus Christ. True Christianity holds the only key of escape from our present plight. "The upshot will depend on the quality of the lead they are able to give, on whether the whole company of Christian people can show a degree of insight, courage and determination that will be convincing. If they are to do this they need to be purged of half-heartedness, complacency, and from wishful thinking" (Sir Walter Moberley in *The Sunday Times*, Nov. 9). This Christianity comes from God and is supernatural in its Spirit. This purging, too, must come eventually from the God we have offended in the past. And we must bear always in mind that it is the Spirit of God, not of man, that can brood creatively over the dark chaos of the present hour.

We must, therefore, avoid the three chief devils of the journalism of the hour by gripping present realities. It is the only way to handle such stinging nettles. The future hangs dark on the horizon and bright illusions about planning and the Soviet regime or about British purity over against the essential foulness of all Germans will not dispel the storm; on the contrary, they will hasten and intensify its violence. It was a dark night when certain shepherds watched their flocks; but the "brightness of God shone round about them." They were brought into touch with Reality; their future was assured.

Some Things New and Old

DIOCESES OF THE CHURCH

How many dioceses are there in the Catholic Church?

There are many dioceses which have bishops; also

there are many bishops who have no dioceses. Which is a roundabout way of saying that in the Catholic Church there are two kinds of episcopal jurisdictions. First of all, a bishop must have a see—that is the universal rule of the Church. But there are some sees where the bishop lives, and there are others where not only the bishop does not live but where, in a large number of instances, no one else lives. This does not mean that the latter are imaginary dioceses, but simply that they are very ancient bishoprics which exist now only in name.

Here is an explanation of the position. In the archdiocese of New York there is one archbishop, who is assisted by three auxiliary bishops. Now the Archbishop of New York is what is known as a Bishop-in-Ordinary or residential bishop, because he resides within the territory over which he exercises jurisdiction. But his assistant bishops, although they possess the plenitude of the priesthood which is inherent in the episcopate, do not possess that faculty of jurisdiction of government which is the sole right of the Archbishop of New York. For instance, the ecclesiastical position of one of these assistant bishops is that of titular Bishop of Medea. At one time there actually was a diocese of Medea, but it no longer exists, and so the Church still claims the title to this once existing see.

All told, there are just now some 1,223 residential episcopal sees throughout the world, which have archbishops or bishops living within these territories and exercising territorial jurisdiction. Since Pius XII became Pope in 1939, some 24 new dioceses have been formed.

In addition to the residential sees, there are the titular bishoprics, which are assigned to assistant bishops, to archbishops and bishops who have resigned their sees, and to the Vicars Apostolic. Of the titular bishoprics there are about 600, not all of which are

assigned. These sees, either on account of the decay and passing away of the Christian population or the invasion of the Mohammedans, lapsed. But it is within the power of the Pope, who has universal jurisdiction, to assign to non-residential bishops title to these sees formerly known as in the lands of the infidel.

NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES

How many Catholics are there in the Netherlands East Indies?

According to the latest figures released by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, there were in the Netherlands East Indies, up to the time of the Japanese invasion, about 601,670 Catholics, of whom 509,660 are native Catholics. The first Javanese native Bishop is a Jesuit, the most Rev. A. Soegya-pranata, S.J., and, moreover, there are fourteen native Javanese priests, members of the Society of Jesus.

Forty-two years ago, in the whole Netherlands East Indies, there was but a single Apostolic Vicariate, with fifty-nine priests engaged in missionary work. Today, or rather until the Japanese occupation, there are twelve Apostolic Vicariates and four Prefectures Apostolic in the islands. The personnel of the Catholic Church in these islands is, so far as we know: 599 Priests, 543 Brothers, 1,927 Sisters. The native Catholic personnel is: 1 Javanese Bishop, 16 native priests, 203 native Sisters, 46 native major seminarians, 243 native minor seminarians.

The work undertaken by the Catholic Church in the Islands includes 1,796 Catholic schools, 62 Catholic hospitals, 2 leper colonies. There are 1,180 school teachers of the Religious Orders and 2,349 lay school teachers.

This is a marvelous achievement, because it was not until 1859 that the Dutch Government allowed

two Jesuits to enter Java, and then only for the purpose of ministering to the Catholics who had migrated from Holland. All missionary contacts with the natives were forbidden. Yet today there is a native Javanese Bishop, and a Jesuit at that!

TITULAR CHURCHES

What are the titular churches in Rome which are assigned to the Cardinals?

Whenever an ecclesiastic is created a Cardinal by the Pope, there is assigned to him a church in Rome, from which the Cardinal takes his title. This is an extremely ancient custom, dating back to the time when the churches in Rome were presided over by the chief presbyters and deacons, and from which the titular or incumbent derived the emoluments or income, usually called a benefice.

Today probably no income is derived by a Cardinal from his titular church. But the custom is for a newly created Cardinal to take solemn and formal possession of his titular church as soon as possible after he has been invested by the Pope with the cardinalitial vesture in Consistory. But besides this taking possession, a Cardinal has jurisdiction over his titular church and the right to a throne therein, even though his church is within the episcopal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome.

A Cardinal is usually known, certainly in formal documents, as "Cardinal X of the title of Saint Y."

In the English-speaking world these are the present cardinalitial titles: Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, of the title of Saint Clement; Cardinal Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia, of the title of Saints Nereus and Achille; Cardinal MacRory, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, of the title of Saint John Before the Latin Gate; Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec, of the title of Saint

Mary of the Angels; Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster, of the title of Saint Susanna.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS

How many Religious Orders are there in the Catholic Church, and what is the number of their membership?

There are two kinds of Religious Orders or Congregations in the Catholic Church. The first category includes those known as *iuris pontificis*, which means of pontifical law, and they are under the immediate jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of Religious. Then there is a second class which is not under the jurisdiction of Rome, but subject to the local Bishop-in-Ordinary. Most of the latter class, in the course of time, are approved by Rome and ultimately come under the jurisdiction of the Congregation of Religious.

But of the first category, those subject to the Roman Congregation, there are 874 Orders and Congregations, with a membership of about 790,000. Of these, the Orders of men taking solemn vows number 61, with a membership of 108,347; those taking simple vows number 93, with 105,067 members. Orders of women taking simple vows number 720, with 574,924 members.

Whilst the Society of Jesus has the largest single membership of 26,588, there are more Franciscans, since the First Order of Saint Francis, numbering some 40,415 religious, is divided into three groups—Conventual Friars, 2,757; Capuchins, 18,510; Friars Minor, 24,148. The largest Congregation of women is the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul with a membership of 43,325.